

DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)
MINUTES
March 18, 2015

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Zachary Renstrom, County Commission
Vice Chairman Jon Pike, St. George Mayor
Darren LeFevre, Toquerville Mayor
Wayne Peterson, Leeds Mayor
Bette Arial, St. George City Council, Senator Mike Lee's Office
Ken Sizemore, Santa Clara City Council
Jimmie Hughes, St. George City

OTHERS PRESENT

Don Ipson, Representative
Alan Gardner, County Commission
Stan Smith, Springdale Mayor
Bruce Densley, Virgin Mayor
Rick Moser, Apple Valley Mayor
Arthur LeBaron, Hurricane City
Kyle Gubler, LaVerkin City Administrator
Gary Webster, Cong. Chris Stewart's Office
Bill Swadley, Senator Orrin Hatch's Office
Kyler Brower, Senator Mike Lee's Office
Rick Torgerson, UDOT
Dana Meier, UDOT
Myron Lee, Dixie MPO
Dave Demas, Dixie MPO
Curt Hutchings, Five County
Bryan Thiriot, Five County
Dave Glenn, Ivins City
Ron Whitehead, Washington County
Joel Tucker, Washington County
Miriam Palma, St. George City
Fred Davies, Sun Tran
John Reed, Southern Utah Bicycle Alliance

EXCUSED

Chairman Chris Hart, Ivins Mayor
John Bramall, Hurricane Mayor
Naghi Zeenati, Utah Transportation Commission, Region 4

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Jon Pike welcomed all in attendance, Chairman Chris Hart is out of town and was excused from the meeting. Introductions were made. There was no quorum at the beginning of the meeting, but one existed later for voting on action items.

BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes from February 18, 2015

MOTION: Motion by Mayor Peterson to Approve the Minutes from the February 18, 2015, DTEC meeting. Motion seconded by Bette Arial and carried by unanimous vote.

B. JPAC Report

Ken Sizemore was asked by Mayor Hart to attend the March Joint Policy Advisory Council (JPAC) held in Salt Lake City. JPAC is comprised of four (4) Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the State along with key staff from the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), Utah Transit Authority as well as other entities. Their purpose is to join together on a state-wide basis to discuss important transportation and policy issues and to present a unified voice to the legislature and other discussion makers regarding transportation issues. One of the major accomplishments of the group is the development and adoption of a unified planning document that combines all of the transportation plans for the MPOs and UDOT.

The meeting consisted of a presentation from UBER, which is a fast growing private transportation company making headway across the world with their presence. They have full-time staff in Salt Lake City and are expanding their efforts with a small presence now in St. George. They informed the group that they fill a niche that the public sector transit doesn't fill, which is that last mile from the bus stop to your house or vice-versa. There is an application that you can download, type in your location and typically within three (3) minutes an independently contracted driver will take you that last mile to or from the transit stop.

Another item discussed at JPAC was funding. This meeting happened before the State Legislature concluded and recalled that on the last day of the session in the final moments, the Transportation Bill was authorized. The Bill increases the gas tax and also provides a local option to counties to increase their transportation funding as well.

Another discussion was making sure asset management programs are data driven and have credibility along with trying to acquire the lowest possible life-cycle cost whether it's a road or a bus. The transit authority discussed how a typical transit bus has an anticipated life of five hundred thousand (500,000) miles or twelve (12) years.

At the request of Mayor Hart, Ken asked the JPAC Committee if they would be willing to move their meetings to Fridays which would allow Mayor Hart to attend as a voting member. JPAC mentioned there were only three (3) more meetings this year that are

on Thursdays, the rest take place on Fridays. They will consider the request at the next JPAC meeting on Friday, May 8th.

C. Library Signage

Commissioner Renstrom expressed that members of the public struggle to locate libraries within Washington County, specifically in St. George and Hurricane. Washington County would like to increase signage on various UDOT, local and county roads to assist the public. The County has money in their budget for the signs and will be contacting the appropriate individuals to make them aware of where the signs will be placed.

Joel Tucker, the Washington County Library Director mentioned that the library is a resource to communities as well as visitors and would like people to be able to find the library closest to them. He presented a picture of a proposed sign that would aid in this endeavor.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A. Dixie Transportation Expo Report

Curt Hutchings presented a report on the Dixie Transportation Expo and spoke about the numbers in attendance and how the final attendance number of six hundred and sixty eight (668) is taken from those that signed in. There are many that chose not to sign, so the actual attendance is higher than documented.

A Regional Project Survey was distributed to Expo attendees. Among other things, attendees were asked their top three (3) transportation projects of interest, the reasons for choosing them, and their concerns. The survey report shows the top three (3) priorities as: safety, congestion relief, and air quality.

(see attached for the 2015 Dixie Transportation Expo Report)

Bette Arial commented on how impressed people were at the Expo with the large maps and the informed staff that were available to answer questions.

Myron Lee recognized Miriam Palma, who works for the City of St. George as the Public Works Administrative Assistant. Myron presented an award for Miriam's ten (10) years of service to the Dixie Transportation Expo, explaining that she has played an integral role in making the Expo one of the best in the State.

B. Legislative Report

Representative Ipson reported on House Bill 362 as passed by the 2015 Utah State Legislature. The bill increases the gas tax from 24.5 cents per gallon to 29 cents per gallon beginning January 1, 2016. The new tax is indexed to inflation at twelve percent (12%) with a forty cents (.40) per gallon absolute cap.

Mayor Pike mentioned the bill also provided a local option to increase sales tax by one quarter of one percent for transportation funding.

Commissioner Renstrom mentioned that due to the Recreation and Parks (RAP) tax being fairly new there wouldn't be a lot of public support for another tax increase for a while.

Commissioner Gardner expressed that before anything happened on the County level a resolution from all of the cities asking for the increase would need to be sent to the County.

Ron Whitehead clarified that the potential point two five percent (.25%) increase would be allocated as follows: point one zero percent (.10%) would go to the cities, point zero five percent (.05%) to the County, and point one zero percent (.10%) would go to the provider of transit services, or to the county in areas where no transit services are provided by a taxing entity.

Mayor Peterson commented that since gas prices are down, people are spending more money on eating out and other activities. The increase to the general sales tax should happen at a time when it doesn't have an adverse economic effect on people rather than waiting an extra year when gas prices could be higher again.

Myron presented a three (3) page brief on House Bill 362 and encouraged everyone to read and understand the bill, which is the local option 0.25% general sales tax for transportation.

A primary seat belt law also passed this year. The law allows officers to cite drivers for non-seatbelt use without first observing another violation. The violation fee can be waived if an on-line course is taken and a warning is given before someone is actually ticketed. This is not a revenue enhancement as the fees are minimal. The goal is safety and trying to change behavior to buckle up and save lives.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

A. Long Range Plan (Set For Public Comment)

Myron handed out the Draft 2015-2040 Regional Transportation Plan that is now ready for public comment. Maps were also distributed, which is considered "Appendix A" of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The Regional Transportation Plan was last updated in 2011. It is required to be updated every five (5) years but agreed to update it every four (4) years to be in sync with the Unified Plan along with JPAC.

The Dixie Transportation Advisory Committee (DTAC) has seen the plan and recommended it for public comment from April 1, 2015 through May 31, 2015. The Five County Association of Governments will have it on their website, and will put it on the Unified Plan website as well as advertise it for public comment. Myron will also provide a copy and send out the link to each of the cities so that they can provide it on their website for advertisement.

(see attached for Draft 2015-2040 Regional Transportation Plan and Appendix A maps)

MOTION: Motion by Ken Sizemore to Approve Public Comment from April 1, 2015 through May 1, 2015 on Draft 2015-2040 Regional Transportation Plan. Motion seconded by Jimmy Hughes and carried by unanimous vote.

SHORT RANGE PLANNING

A. COG Meeting Report

Ron Whitehead stated that at the Council on Governments (COG) meeting the priority list was approved with the addition of a few roads as well as removing a few older ones. The priority list was then approved by Resolution No. R-2015-1894 at the County Commission Meeting held on March 17, 2015.

Ron also mentioned that UDOT's Corridor Preservation group will be conducting training on how funds are allocated and what they can be used for. This will be held tomorrow, March 19th at 9:00 AM in the downstairs conference room at 197 E. Tabernacle and is for elected and public works officials.

UDOT/FHWA BUSINESS

A. UDOT Updates

Rick Torgerson stated that the Southern Parkway Phase Three project from Washington

Dam Road to Warner Valley Road is moving along.

The project at the intersection of Sunset and Bluff, will be looked at in more detail over the next few months finding long-term alternatives that can work at that intersection.

Several passing lanes will be added this summer to the I-15 Corridor.

The speed limits on parts of the Southern Parkway will be adjusted but are waiting for a traffic engineering order, so signs have not been put into place yet.

Mayor Pike stated that several complaints have come in mentioning that there are no signs indicating a merge on Southbound I-15, just prior to the Bluff Street and Dixie Drive Interchanges. Rick will look into this.

Speed limits along the Wasatch Front went to 70 MPH and Mayor Pike was wondering if anything will change in the St. George area. Rick expressed that more than likely it will change. The Legislature asked UDOT to take a look at I-80, I-70 and the rest of I-15 and currently have a draft report out for all of I-70 and the rest of I-15 in the urbanized areas. When the studies are completed they will be discussed at a future Commission Meeting. Bette would like to see the fatality numbers due to higher speed limits, from the report.

B. Federal Updates

Mayor Pike commented that last week while in Washington D.C., several individuals, including himself, were able to meet and speak about transportation issues with Senator Lee as well as staff of Congressman Stewart and Senator Hatch and appreciates the attention received for this area.

OTHER BUSINESS

No items were presented.

NEXT MEETING

Next Scheduled DTEC meeting: April 15, 2015.

ADJOURN

Having no other business, Vice Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nicholle Felshaw